

Intentional Homemaking

30 DAY CHALLENGE





Welcome

Being a homemaker is such an important role!
That's why I'm so thrilled about this 30-day challenge! 30 Days of Intentional Homemaking will hopefully inspire us all to rise to the challenge of creating a space that feels like home.

Melissa Ringstaff

Introduction



Intentional Homemaking

30 Day of Intentional Homemaking is for the woman who desires an atmosphere of love and peace in her home. It's for the woman who for whatever reason is currently struggling to get her home in order but wants to oh so much!

And this 30-day challenge is for the busy woman who feels like she works all the time but isn't accomplishing her goals. It's so easy to feel weary! And sometimes as hard as we work and try to do good it seems as if nothing gets done and improvement never happens.

You'll learn:



Sometimes the daily tasks of homemaking seem overwhelming. Chores are repetitive, laundry piles up, activities keep up stretched too thin, and maintaining relationships can be difficult. Husbands don't understand and children make messes.

- what making a home really means
- how disorganization affects every area of your life
- how we demonstrate love through homemaking
- how to create new habits to replace the old
- why it's so important to depend daily on God
- how to maintain a spirit of worship in your home
- how to create a routine that really works
- what to clean and when
- how we can live out the gospel in our homemaking
- and so much more!

Day 1

What does it mean to make a home?

Families need women who make home a special place to live, learn, and grow. There is no other job that presents as many opportunities for shaping (for the good or the bad) the future of our country – of our world – than that of a homemaker.

Each of us is a homemaker. Whether you work outside the home or stay home full time, you are a homemaker.

Whether you live with a big boisterous family or it's just you and a couple of children – or just you and your husband – or even just you -, you are a homemaker. We've all been called to the ministry of homemaking.



Homemaking is a noble work. In fact, despite our culture's often negative portrayal of homemaking and women who make a home, do you know anyone who doesn't appreciate a home that is well-tended, cared for, warm, and inviting? Who doesn't love to crawl into a freshly made bed after a hard day or open their drawers to find clean socks and underwear?

Homemaking is the work of a woman who cares tenderly for her children when they are in distress. It is the work of the loving wife as she prepares her husband's favorite meal.

It is the work of the woman who folds the laundry in preparation for a full week of busy activities. It is the work of the woman who sets the table and calls her family to eat. It is the work of a woman who bends down on her knees and prays with her children.

Making a home is about so much more than just keeping a house neat and tidy although that is certainly an important aspect of homemaking.

Making a home is about creating a space that feels like home. A space that welcomes weary souls into its warmth. A space that provides a safe atmosphere for children to learn, love, and grow. It is about creating special memories and traditions that are passed on from generation to generation.

What do you think of when you think of home? Perhaps you have a few favorite memories of your own childhood home.

- That favorite meal your mother always prepared.
- Birthday celebrations.
- The way your father folded his hands in prayer.
- Relaxing in front of the television together after a long day.
- Playing board games at every holiday gathering.

Whatever those memories are, they all comprise the meaning of home to you. On the other hand, maybe you came from a difficult family situation and your memories of home are jaded and unhappy. That hurts and perhaps you even struggle with creating a happy home today because you didn't have the best example growing up.

You can move past those hurt feelings by creating your own happy home *today*.



Creating a Happy Home

There are a few components that can help make a happy home:

- unconditional love
- patience
- an atmosphere of acceptance
- healthy boundaries
- a reasonable set of rules to live by
- laughter
- meals around the table
- a tidy, organized space
- faith in Jesus
- grace when mistakes happen

It's important that we offer those who live in our home love, patience, and acceptance. Everyone needs to know they are loved and accepted and allowed to make mistakes.

"Love is patient, love is kind..." 1 Corinthians 13:4

I've said this before, but the real key to patience is valuing the other person so much that nothing is more important than your relationship. It's not always easy to love your family members unconditionally.

People can be downright difficult. Some people are really hard to love. But how much we all need to be loved!

Setting Healthy Boundaries

That's where setting up healthy boundaries comes in to play. Having healthy boundaries means that there are limits to what is okay and what is not okay. This is so important!!

"Personal boundaries are are the physical, emotional and mental limits we establish to protect ourselves from being manipulated, used, or violated by others." – source: Essential Life Skills Hopefully you are not in a situation where people you love regularly take advantage of you.

Creating a home that feels safe and loving for those who live there means that there are boundaries people don't cross. Boundaries are as simple as respecting another person's space and personal belongings, respecting another person's right to be independent, respecting another person's right to make choices and make mistakes.

Basically, when we respect each other through our words and actions we are also acknowledging appropriate boundaries.

Boundaries are also important not for just adults, but for children too. Children who are raised in homes where healthy boundaries are established are happier and well adjusted. Children need to know what's okay and what's not okay. They need to have reasonable rules imposed so that they learn self-control, responsibility, respect, and right from wrong.

Laughter

Nothing makes a home happier than laughter. Every home should be filled with laughter, joy, and a sense of belonging that comes with camaraderie. Whether you laugh together at a silly joke, or tell a funny story, or play games on the floor, laughter brings delight and joy to everyone who experiences it.

I can't encourage you enough to find ways every day to laugh together. Laughter helps to reduce stress and anxiety and the Bible says that a cheerful heart is like medicine to the bones!

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength. Proverbs 17:22

Meals Around the Table

Studies have shown that children who grow up in homes where eating together is a common occurrence are happier, healthier, do better in school, and are less likely to get involved in dangerous activities like drugs and alcohol.

Sitting together around the table and sharing a meal brings people closer together. Families are more likely to communicate and share about their day when sharing a meal. Food often brings people together. Think about all the special celebrations and traditions that involve food. Mealtime is a time to come together, relax for a little while, and nourish our bodies and souls.

As a homemaker, providing meals that are healthy but taste good is an important task and worthy of time and energy spent planning and preparing for mealtime. Think about it. We all have to eat every single day. Food is very important. Without good food, our bodies suffer. Without meals around the table, our relationships suffer.

A Tidy Organized Space

Homemaking, as well all know, definitely involves a good deal of housekeeping. The work never ends – from laundry that piles up daily, to dishes that fill the sink, to all the clutter and stuff that can fill our homes, homemaking can be exhausting.

But don't think that these tasks are not important. Creating a space that feels like home means that you work to create a space that is comfortable to live in. Comfort is perhaps subjective – some people are only comfortable in a space that is very neat, while others are okay with some clutter.

I would like to suggest though that a neat space, not perfect, is important to everyone whether they admit to it or not. Studies have shown that children who live in a neat home do better in school and are more successful overall. Studies have also shown that children who live in messy homes where chaos is normal are more likely to have behavior problems.

The child who grows up in a home that is tidy, has basic schedules and routines set in place, knows what to expect, eats regular meals three times a day is more likely to be organized, do well in school, and feel secure in their environment.

But think about the child who grows up in total chaos – there's never clean laundry, mealtimes are sporadic, and there's no set routine for the day is more likely to feel unsure about their day, struggle to be responsible, and feel stress on a daily basis. They are also more likely to have behavior problems.

She looks well to the ways of her household. Proverbs 31:27

Homemaking is important! Never think that the unseen work of your hands is of little impact. Every time you serve your family by cooking a meal, cleaning a room, or doing the laundry you are nurturing your family's mental and physical well-being.

Faith in Jesus

And finally, faith in Jesus creates an atmosphere of love and belonging in a home. As you work to make your home a place of love, do not neglect to spend time each day in prayer and worship. It's important for us as homemakers to make worship a priority. That can mean we spend a few minutes in personal prayer each morning. It's also important that we teach our children what it means to follow Jesus.

These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. Deuteronomy 6:6,7

Teach your children what it means to be a Christ-follower. Show them by example. Pray for your husband and children. Pray together. Show them grace when they need it and say you're sorry when you are wrong. Demonstrate the love of Christ in everything you do.

What home means to me...

We've looked at a number of aspects on what does it mean to make a home. Being a homemaker is a sacred calling. We are all called to the ministry of homemaking.

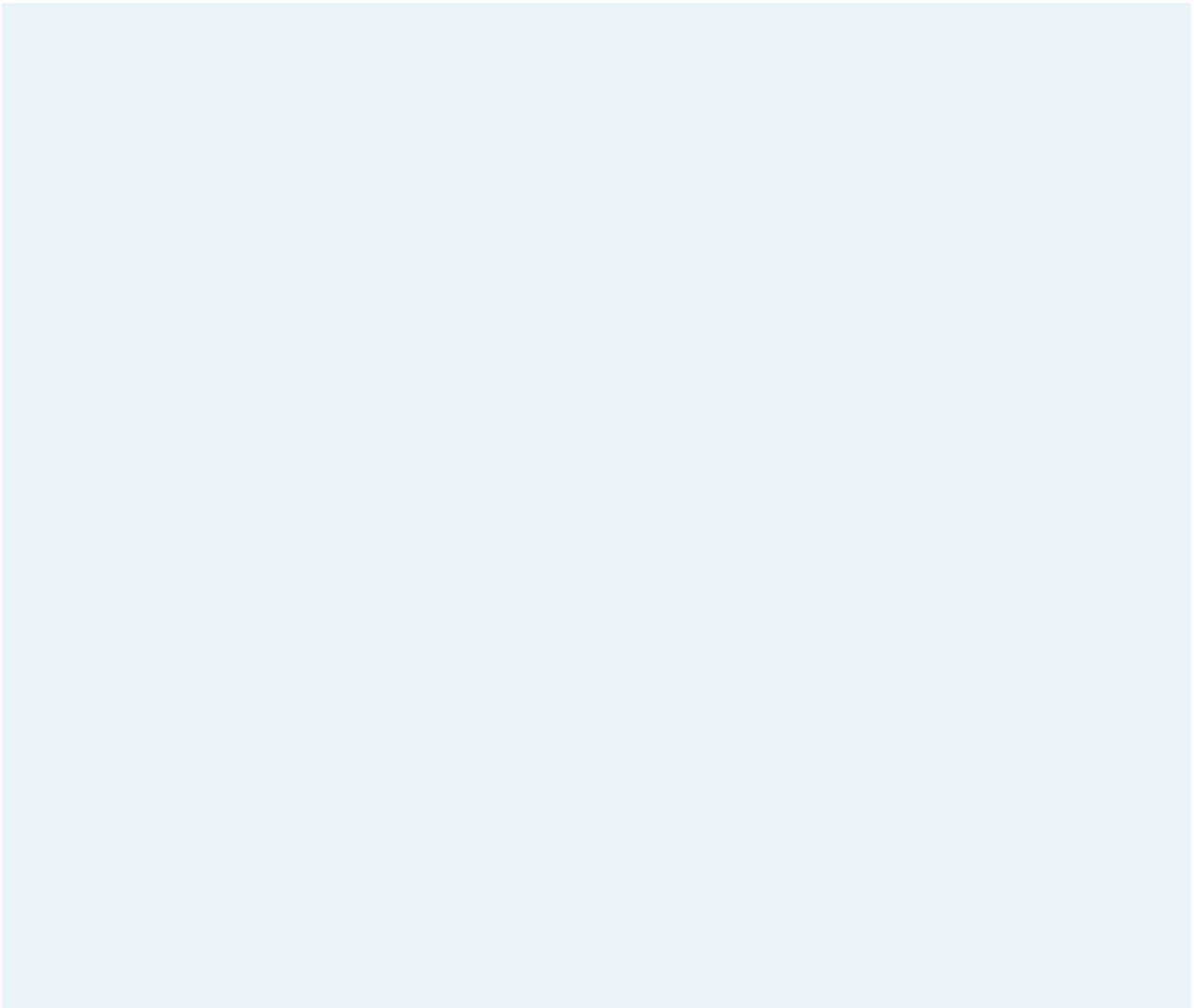
What does home mean to you?

What memories from your childhood about home stand out the most to you?

Home-making

We've looked at a number of aspects on what does it mean to make a home. Being a homemaker is a sacred calling. We are all called to the ministry of homemaking.

We talked about some of the ways you can create a happy atmosphere in your home. What are some ways you want to create a happy home for your family?

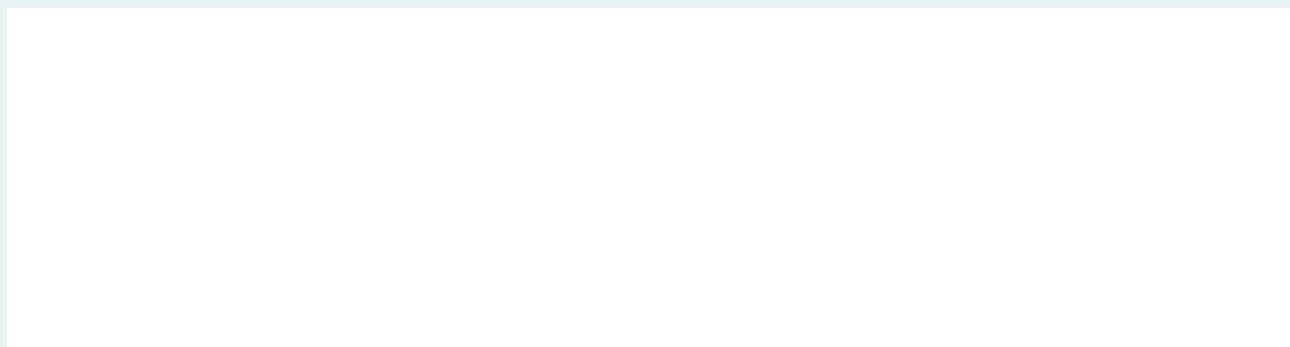


Boundaries

Boundaries are always part of a healthy relationship. It's important that we establish healthy boundaries within our family life. Boundaries tell you what is okay and what is not okay in your relationship. What are some boundaries you have set in your relationships at home?



In your opinion, what does a healthy relationship look like? What are some ways you might improve the boundaries in your family relationships?



Meals Around the Table

What do meal times look like in your family?

What would you like for meal times to be like?

How can you plan ahead to make meal time easier?

What do you want your family to remember about meal time?

Weekly Menu Plan



WEEK OF: _____

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

GROCERY LIST

A Tidy Space

Creating a space that feels like home means that you work to create a space that is comfortable to live in. Comfort is perhaps subjective – some people are only comfortable in a space that is very neat, while others are okay with some clutter. Just know - it's easier to keep your home tidy when you don't have a lot of clutter.



DECLUTTER QUESTIONS

- Have I used this item in the last year?
- If I was shopping would I buy this again?
- Is this item broken? Is it worth fixing?
- Would I keep this item if I moved?

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#1: My Prayer Life

How is your prayer life? What could you improve?

#2: Family Worship

How often do we worship as a family? What would I like to change? How can we grow closer to God as a family?
